

Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions: conclusion of the UNESCO Convention, adopted in Paris on 20 October 2005

2005/0268(CNS) - 21/12/2005 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to conclude the UNESCO Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expression.

PROPOSED ACT : Council Decision.

CONTENT : in October 2003, the General Conference of UNESCO decided unanimously to open negotiations on a convention on protecting the diversity of cultural contents and artistic expressions. The Convention was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO on 20 October 2005. The Council of Ministers, in authorising the Commission to negotiate on behalf of the Community in November 2004, handed down negotiating directives calling on it to ensure that the Convention included the necessary clauses for the Community to become party to it. Consequently, Article 27 of the Convention establishes the possibility for the European Community to become a contracting party and play an active role in the organs of the Convention, in particular the Conference of the Parties established by Article 22 of the Convention. It is therefore important for the European Community to become a party to the Convention, together with the Member States of the European Union.

More specifically, the purpose of the present proposal is therefore to authorise the approval of the UNESCO Convention by the European Community. The full participation of the European Community and its Member States in implementing the Convention will in particular contribute to:

- establishing a new pillar of world governance with the aim of ensuring protection and promotion of cultural diversity;
- emphasising the specific and dual (cultural and economic) nature of cultural goods and services;
- recognising the role and legitimacy of public policies in the protection and promotion of cultural diversity;
- recognising the importance of, and promoting, international cooperation to respond to cultural vulnerabilities, in particular with regard to developing countries;
- defining appropriate links with other international instruments that enable the Convention to be implemented effectively.